

Message Text

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15
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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----- 011793

R 130825Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9107
INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E O 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, CD, SW
SUBJ: SWEDISH MISSIONARIES REQUESTED LEAVE CHAD IN MIDST
VITUPERIOUS MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST INITIATION OPPONENTS

REF: NDJAMENA 0243

1. NINE SWEDISH PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES OPERATING DISPENSARIES
AND ORPHANAGES IN BAIBOKUM AREA SOUTHWESTERN CHAD, AFTER HAVING
BEEN BROUGHT TO NDJAMENA BY GOC FOR PRESS CONFERENCE FEB 1
(REFTEL), WERE INFORMALLY ORDERED THIS WEEK TO LEAVE CHAD,
ACCORDING RELIABLE SOURCES. THREE WERE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE BY
AIR ABOUT FEB 12, WHILE REMAINING SIX WERE GIVEN PERMISSION TO
PROCEED TO HOMES NEAR BAIBOKUM, COLLECT BELONGINGS AND VEHICLES,
AND DEPART OVERLAND FOR CAMEROONS. MISSIONARIES HAVE NOT,
HOWEVER, BEEN FORMALLY EXPELLED BY GOC.

2. ACCOMPANYING MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST SWEDISH MISSIONARIES
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REMARKABLE FOR ITS VITUPERATION. WEEKLY CANARD DECHaine (FEB

5) HEADLINES DESCRIBE THEM AS "MERCENARIES" AND "AGENTS OF INTERNATIONAL SUBVERSION" AND SUGGESTS THAT TRANSCIVERS AND PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT IN POSSESSION SWEDES USED FOR ESPIONAGE. MISSIONARIES ACCUSED OF SETTING MBOUM TRIBE AGAINST LAKAS, INCITING POPULATION AGAINST FRENCH MISSIONARIES OF THE REGION; FORBIDDING CHRISTIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN YONDOH TRIBAL INITIATION; ENCOURAGING DISSIDENTS TO FLEE ABROAD; AND GIVING WORLD PRESS FALSE REPORTS REGARDING PRETENDED PERSECUTION CHRISTIANS IN CHAD.

3. MEDIA HAS GIVEN LARGE PLAY TO FRENCH PROTESTANT MISSIONARY IN SAME AREA, ONE MME THEVENET, WIDOW OF ASSEMBLY OF GOD 1964 FOUNDER DISPENSARIES AND ORPHANAGES IN BAIBOKUM AREA. MME THEVENET QUOTED EXTENSIVELY PRESS AND RADIO TO EFFECT THAT CHRISTIANS ON RETURN FROM INITIATION BETTER CHRISTIANS THAN PREVIOUSLY AND THAT SHE HAS NO KNOWLEDGE PERSECUTIONS. RUMOR COLUMN ("ON DIT QUE"....) INSINUATES 1972 TRAFFIC ACCIDENT DEATH OF MARCEL THEVENET IN FRANCE NOT ACCIDENTAL BUT PART "DIABOLICAL PLOT."

4. FULL PAGE LETTER CANARD DECHAINE BY ANONYMOUS "CHADIAN CHRISTIAN" TO CANADIAN PASTOR GERALD WRIGHT OF ONTARIO (APPARENT LEADER OF CANADIAN PROTESTS) CHALLENGES ASSERTATIONS PERSECUTIONS, AND DEMANDS SPECIFIC NAMES AND INCIDENTS. MME THEVENET QUOTED LIBERALLY IN DEFENSE OF INITIATION, AS WELL AS ABSENCE PUBLIC OPPOSITION FROM CATHOLICS.

5. COMMENT: SWEDISH MISSIONARIES, MOST OF WHOM YOUNG, APPEAR TO HAVE PUSHED THEIR LUCK TOO FAR AND TOO VOCIFEROUSLY WHILE INTRA-SECT DIFFERENCES WITH MME THEVENET OFFERED UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR GOC TO ATTEMPT DISCREDIT THEIR ALLEGATIONS. PROBLEMS OF SWEDES DO NOT APPEAR AT MOMENT EXTEND OTHER PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES, AND, INDEED, RELIABLE SOURCES REPORT THAT GOC WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO SWEDES BEING REPLACED BY OTHER FOREIGN MISSIONARIES. LOCAL OFFICIAL FRENCH SOURCES HAVE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT FRENCH AUTHORITIES HAVE MADE REPRESENTATIONS TO MME THEVENET'S FRENCH SPONSORS THAT GOC WOULD PREFER THAT SHE NOT RETURN TO CHAD AS RESULT HER BLATANT INTERFERENCE INTERNAL AFFAIRS. CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES CHAD KEEPING LOW PROFILE, ALTHOUGH CATHOLIC BISHOP OF SARH RECENTLY TOLD VISITOR THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NUMBER YOUNGER PRIESTS AND NUNS HIS DIOCESE SYMPATHETIC TO POSITION PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES AND WOULD LIKE TAKE MORE OUTSPOKEN STAND.

6. FOR YAOUNDE: PLEASE PASS ABOVE INFO CANADIAN CHARGE. LITTLE

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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